

# LIFE @ ST. PHILIP'S



St. Philip's Lutheran Church | Toronto, ON

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### DATES OF NOTE:

Feb. 5 - Evangel Hall Dinner  
 Feb. 9 - 50+ Luncheon  
 Feb. 14, 21, 28 - Winter Good  
 Food Market  
 Feb. 12 - Confirmation Class  
 Feb. 19 - Pancake Lunch  
 Feb. 22 - Service of Ashes  
 Feb. 24 - 26 Youth Retreat  
 Feb. 25 - Messy Church  
 Feb. 26 - Annual Meeting

### HOLIDAYS:

Pastor Tuula  
 Feb 6. - Feb. 17  
 Margaret Isaacs  
 Feb. 21 - Mar. 6

### CHURCH OFFICE HOURS:

Monday - Friday: 9 - 12

### OFFICE CLOSED:

Monday, Feb. 20 - Family Day



## From Pastor Tuula

Lent begins on **Ash Wednesday, February 22**, and for many of us it means a serious, joyless 40 days. It doesn't have to be. Consider yourself lucky if someone taught you along the way that the Lord has a sense of humour. Or are you one of those who must wait until Easter falls on April Fool's Day to discover that Jesus Christ has the last laugh?

Many of us were raised in solemn traditions that view scripture as containing more legalism and moralism than levity and surprise. But what if humour is one of God's chief attributes? How else might we explain the impregnation of 90-year-old Sarah? Or God afflicting the Philistines with hemorrhoids (emerods) when they stole the Ark of the Covenant? Or Mary and Martha needing to erase Lazarus's obituary.

Humour is not the same as laughter or telling jokes. It's what Viktor Frankl called "the soul's weapon" for rising above our situation. Good humour relieves us from stale living. It helps us accept the incongruities of life. Among its greatest gifts, humour helps us name our weaknesses, keep things in proportion, and laugh at ourselves.

Limericks often convey subtleties of humor. The most memorable ones hold rhymes together and provide a special twist in the last line. While looking for an unconventional way to engage his church choir during rehearsals, Christopher Brunelle landed on the idea of writing a series of limericks following the liturgical season. Some of these are published in a little book, The Church Year in Limericks (MorningStar).

*(...continued on next page)*

For those suspicious of the value in connecting limericks with Lent:

*Are limericks suited to Lent?  
Yes, indeed, in both form and intent:  
They're a well-designed ploy  
To bring insight and joy  
With a final, uplifting event.*

If it seems like Lent will never end, here's a limerick to power you through:

*Can it be that we've drained only half  
Of the gall in Lent's bitter carafe?  
Though we gain from such crockery  
Devilish mockery  
Jesus will get the last laugh.*

*See you in church!  
Pastor Tuula*

## From Janelle Lightbourne, Intern

Happy February and Happy Black History Month to you. If you have worshiped with us recently, you may have noticed that I wear a black alb. This may be new and a bit different from what you are used to seeing. Wearing a black alb is new for me too.

I have been a part of the Lutheran church for 8 years now and I have typically worn the standard white alb when leading or assisting with services. The alb in its traditional form--full length, white with long sleeves--is imbued with meaning. It is the garment of the baptized and its colour symbolizes Christ's death and resurrection. For North American and European Christians, white is typically associated with joy, light and the purity of Christ. The colour white is used on feast days of the church, Trinity Sunday, for saints who were not martyrs and sometimes for funerals. Alternatively, black is associated with mourning—Good Friday and funerals. There are also many scriptures that use 'darkness' to refer to sin and the absence of God while "light" refers to purity, salvation and holiness.

The alb still carries all of this historical and theological significance. However, for me, as a Black woman living in Canada and working in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC), the colors white and black also have other meanings. The culture of Canada is one where settlers of European ancestry or those who are White-passing are advantaged over all others. We live and worship in a context of racial tension where White supremacy has systemic and individual effects. In this context, the alb is no longer simply a symbol of baptism and resurrection. Rather, it has unintentional significance to contemporary worshipers and connects us to White supremacy and Euro-centricity.

When I considered all of these factors--our cultural context, church history and traditions, theological uses of light and dark--and my own identity as a Lutheran pastor, wearing a white alb no longer felt innocuous. It felt like a harmful erasure of my experience and the experiences of other Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC). I decided that I could not continue to wear a white alb. I chose to wear a black alb in an effort to push back against the systemic anti-blackness that is so firmly embedded in Canadian culture and our unexamined theology. I feel a sense of calling and purpose when I wear my alb. I also feel connected to Christ and to all those who went before me who looked to God for strength and guidance.

Through this internship, you have given me the opportunity to explore and shape my pastoral identity, even including my choice of vestments. Thank you! If you have questions about my alb, please come and chat with me at coffee hour, or connect with me through email or a phone call.

*With gratitude, Janelle Lightbourne, Pastoral Intern  
519.852.6772; [sja.lightbourne@gmail.com](mailto:sja.lightbourne@gmail.com)*

## Council Corner

It was wonderful to see so many of you in December for the Gingerbread House Building/Carol Sing, Pageant Sunday, Longest Night Service, and Christmas Eve worship. We were blessed with vibrant worship and community time. Please consider setting a New Year's goal of participating in worship and community at St. Philip's by joining the Bible Study, attending Messy Church, or volunteering to aid with Property, Finance, or Church Council.

### Messy Church

As we enter 2023, we are in the early stages of planning exciting initiatives to foster reconnection at St. Philip's and collectively deepen our faith formation. Based on your feedback one of the priorities is Child and Youth Ministry. We are pleased to announce that we conducted the first of a five-month pilot of Messy Church on **Saturday, January 28**. Over 40 attendees had a wonderful time.

The overall goals of Messy Church are to offer a series of monthly faith formation learning experiences that

- introduce God & Jesus through hospitality, friendship, stories, and worship
- provide an opportunity for people of all ages to worship together
- help people of all ages feel they belong in church and to each other
- help people have fun and be creative together

Messy Church is scheduled for the final Saturday of each month from 4:00 - 6:00 pm. For more information or to get involved, please contact Dawn Pascoe at [awakenthedawn@gmail.com](mailto:awakenthedawn@gmail.com).

### Attendance and Giving

We are happy to report that although slightly lower than last year, our worship attendance (in person and online) is holding reasonably steady. Our financial donations are down approximately 20%. We would very much invite you to contribute to ensure our programs and ministry areas can continue.

### Sponsoring an Afghan Family

Janelle opened the January meeting with a reflection on Micah's call to 'do justice, love, mercy, walk humbly.' Immediately after we were asked by the Canadian Lutheran World Relief (CLWR) organization to sponsor an Afghan family. The parents are both journalists who have been threatened because of their work in exposing human rights violations by the Taliban. They are desperate to move to Etobicoke as they have connections here. Perry Taylor is looking for interested members to form a team to help the Omari family move here. Please contact Perry at: [perry.taylor8th@gmail.com](mailto:perry.taylor8th@gmail.com).

### Gratitude

I would like to thank all the council members for their service in this transition year of 2022. We especially thank Debbie Harding and Herb Feller who have completed their terms on Church Council. We look forward to continuing to work with them as they serve on various projects.

*Jerry Hogeveen, Council Chair*

## Amal Project



In collaboration with the Neighbourhood Table and renowned chef, Susan Ng, the Amal Project held its community project on **Tuesday, January 10** in our Fellowship Hall/Kitchen.

The women met, cooked amazing meals, and shared lunch together forming friendships across cultures and instilling a true sense of belonging to the Canadian community.

## From the Choir Loft



St. Philip's Choir and Joyful Noise Bell Choir performed alongside the Christmas Pageant on **Music Sunday, December 18.**



On Christmas Eve we enjoyed the accompaniment of brass. Pictured below - Brass Quartet: Katie Clark, Charlotte McIntosh, Aubrey Kelly, and Bien Carandang.



*Peace, love, and music from the choir loft,  
Chris Ritcey-Conrad*

## Week of Prayer for Christian Unity



To observe the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, St. Philip's participated in the Central Etobicoke Ministerial Pulpit Exchange.

Rev. Brigid Maya Douglas from St. James United Church was our guest preacher on **Sunday, January 22.** Our intern, Janelle Lightbourne, preached at Fellowship Christian Reformed Church at 800 Burnhamthorpe Rd.

## Personal Visit



On **Monday, January 23** Pastor Tuula paid a visit at the home of Alex Kretchman, our oldest living member!

## 50+

On **Thursday, December 15** the 50+ group enjoyed a festive special with all of the trimmings including delicious desserts and beverages for the cost of \$25/person.

Despite the snowy forecast we had about 20 people in attendance.



Much fun was had by all at both events. Please see page 7 for details on the next planned event.

*Margaret Isaacs*

## Winter Good Food Market



Our neighbours at 7 Capri Rd. have a newly renovated community space. They are inviting our Good Food Market in. The market will be important in supporting this community with affordable produce and in offering a gathering place.

We hope you will consider joining us as a market volunteer for one week or every week or anything in between.

Tuesdays for 6 weeks

February 14 - March 2: from 4 - 7 pm

**Two volunteer shifts: 3:30 - 5:30 and 5:30 - 7:30**

Please reach out to Pastor Tuula or Janelle for more details. There is also a sign-up sheet in the narthex.



Kathy Dragert presented the illuminating differences between Santa Claus and Jesus Christ. Sarah Pascoe played piano for the carol singalong led by Janelle Lightbourne, Intern.

On **Thursday, January 19** the 50+ group met for a soup luncheon followed by a film, "Happy New Year" with the Vicar of Dibley.

*Eunice Hogeveen*

## Christmas Pageant

On **Sunday, December 18** we held our annual Music Sunday with Pageant. New costumes were donned by many participants taking part in the Christmas Story. St. Philip's Choir performed three anthems and the Joyful Noise Bell Choir rang in two lovely Christmas tunes. It was a fantastic worship celebrated with a pizza lunch.



**Zumba: Mondays @ 1:00 pm**

**Joyful Noise Bell Choir: Mondays @ 7:15 pm**

**Evangel Hall Dinner: Sunday, Feb. 5 @ 2:30 pm**

**Good Food Market: Feb. 14, 21, 28 @ 4 pm at 7 Capri Rd.**

**Confirmation: Sunday, Feb. 12 @ 11:30 am**

**Lunch and Learn w/Pancakes: Feb. 19 @ 11:00 am**

**Service of Ashes: Feb. 22 @ 7:00 pm**

**Youth Retreat: Feb. 24 - 26 @ Hidden Acres**

**Messy Church: Saturday, Feb. 25 @ 4:00 pm**

**Annual Meeting: Feb. 26 @ 11:00 am**

**Bible Study will return after Lenten Season. Soup Suppers and Holden Evening Prayer Services begin March 1<sup>st</sup>.**

### Readings for February

#### 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Epiphany – February 5

Isaiah 58:1-12/Psalm 112:1-10  
1 Corinthians 2:1-16/Matthew 5:13-20

#### 6<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Epiphany – February 12

##### Service of the Word

Deuteronomy 30:15-20/Psalm 119:1-8  
1 Corinthians 3:1-9/Matthew 5:21-37

#### Transfiguration of our Lord – February 19

Exodus 24:12-18/Psalm 2  
2 Peter 1:16-21/Matthew 17:1-9

#### Ash Wednesday – February 22

Joel 2:1-2,12-17/Psalm 51:1-17  
2 Corinthians 5:20b—6:10/Matthew 6:1-6,16-21

#### First Sunday in Lent – February 26

Genesis 2:15-17,3:1-7/Psalm 32  
Romans 5:12-19/Matthew 4:1-11

### 50+ Chili Luncheon



When: **Thursday, February 9 @ 12:30 pm**

Lunch: Chili with light desserts and refreshments

Program: Current Health Issues; Q & A with Dr. G. Morningstar

Register: By using the sign-up sheet in the narthex or call the church office at 416.622.5577.

### Pancake Lunch



#### Lunch and Learn: Allyship

##### Speakers:

**Janelle Lightbourne and Jerry Hogeveen**

**Sunday, February 19, after worship**

**Join us for pancakes, sausages, bacon, and beverages.**

**Freewill offering.**

***This is also a CLAY fundraiser.***

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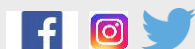
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*'Friend' us on Facebook*

*Instagram: @stphilipslutheran*

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## Congregational Annual Meeting



You are encouraged to attend our Annual Meeting on **Sunday, February 26** immediately after worship service.

This is the time to have your voice heard and hear about future plans here at St. Philip's.

### Next...

Please submit articles and high-res photos (minimum 2 MB) for the next issue of LIFE by **March 1** ... send good news to Margaret Isaacs:  
[stphilip@bellnet.ca](mailto:stphilip@bellnet.ca)



### About St. Philip's - Our Vision

Freed by the grace of Christ, we seek to connect with God, neighbour, and self.

**Vision Statement:** We are a diverse and inclusive Lutheran faith community freed by the grace of Christ to find God and self as we connect with our neighbours.

We practise hospitality of open hearts and open arms. We unite with partners to make a difference in our neighbourhood. We nurture community of Christ.

**Values Supporting the Vision:** Our Lutheran heritage of grace; our call to pray, worship, and learn as we grow in our Christian faith; our needs to gather and belong in Christian community; the call to love our neighbours as Christ loves us; the acceptance of all people as children of God; the opportunities to meet God everywhere.